

Public Policy Committee Meeting Minutes	Tab 16
<p><u>Background:</u></p> <p>Minutes of the November 5, 2015, Public Policy Committee meeting are included for your review.</p>	
<p><u>Public Policy Committee</u></p> <p><u>Agenda Item 3.</u></p>	<p><u>Expected Action:</u></p> <p>The Committee will review, revise as appropriate, and approve.</p>

**PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES
NOVEMBER 5, 2015**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESENT

Lora Taylor, Chair
Hunter Adkins

Kristen Cox
Elaine Eisenbaum, UT- CDS
Mary Faithfull, DRTx
Ruth Mason

Michael Peace
Brandon Pharris
Donnie Wilson, DADS
April Young, HHSC

STAFF PRESENT

Belinda Carlton

Ashley Ford
Linda Logan

Jessica Ramos
Joshua Ryf

GUESTS PRESENT

Shiloh Gonzalez, DARS
Chris Masey, Developmental Disability Fellow (DD Fellow)
Megan Morgan, DD Fellow
Darryl Powell

CALL TO ORDER

The Public Policy Committee convened on Thursday, November 5, 2015, in the Cottonwood Room at the Horseshoe Bay Resort, 200 Hi Circle North, Horseshoe Bay, TX 78657. Public Policy Committee Chair Lora Taylor called those present to order at 2:30 p.m.

1. INTRODUCTION

Chair Taylor asked the Committee members, staff, and guests to introduce themselves and to share their favorite season or holiday.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were offered to the Committee.

3. CONSIDERATION OF AUGUST 6, 2015, MINUTES

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the August 6, 2015, Public Policy Committee meeting.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the August 6, 2015, Public Policy Committee meeting, as presented.

MADE BY: Michael Peace

SECOND: Elaine Eisenbaum

The motion **passed** unanimously.

4. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Taylor reminded everyone that November is National Epilepsy Awareness Month and the designated epilepsy awareness ribbon color is purple. Taylor also noted that purple is the color of political bipartisanship and is inspired and encouraged by the collaboration she has seen between legislators and policy staff. Taylor emphasized the importance of working together to create laws that effectively serve people.

5. MEMBER UPDATES

Hunter Adkins updated the Committee about her recent personal accomplishments. Elaine Eisenbaum announced the appointment of Amy Sharp to serve as executive director for the Texas Center for Disability Studies at the University of Texas.

Per Council Chair Mary Durham's direction, 2017-2021 State Plan Goals and Objectives were discussed. Public Policy Director Jessica Ramos explained that motions to change the State Plan would be considered on an individual basis by the Council on Friday, but that the Committee could discuss their thoughts and potential recommendations. Taylor asks for comments about the proposed State Plan. Eisenbaum discussed the language of goal 2, item d and suggested adding "mental health" to "medical and/or behavioral health" services access to acknowledge mental health as a distinct issue. Mary Faithfull further explained the complexity of the issue and suggested amending the line to say "medical, behavioral, and mental health services." In addition, Developmental Disability Fellow Chris Masey emphasized the importance of financial literacy training beyond understanding benefits in relation to employment. Committee members discussed changing the language of goal 1, item c to add financial literacy to training and information provided to people with developmental disabilities and their families. The Committee agreed that both items should be amended.

6. SUPPORT FOR STATEWIDE SELF-ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION

Chair Taylor asked members for input about TCDD supporting a statewide self-advocacy organization and what characteristics a successful statewide self-advocacy organization would have. Ramos explained support can be given in non-monetary ways including administrative support to ensure success. She discussed the impact self-advocacy organizations can have on public policy and the significance of disability network partners' collaboration. Faithfull recommended that establishing a timeframe for organizational self-sufficiency and independence should be determined prior to initiating funding because historically the Council has not provided long-term funding. The Committee noted that the Council's role is not to be sustainers and that it would be difficult to end funding.

7. SELECTION OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBER

Chair Taylor explained that Council policies provide for a Nominating Committee to be established each year at the fall Council meeting. Taylor asked the Public Policy Committee to nominate one of its members to the Council's Nominating Committee. Brandon Pharris nominated himself.

MOTION: To approve Brandon Pharris as the designated member of the Nominating Committee.

MADE BY: Hunter Adkins

SECOND: Michael Peace

The motion **passed** unanimously.

8. TCDD POSITION STATEMENT REVIEW

Ramos presented the Position Statement Review Schedule and explained the process and the purpose of reviewing the position statements. Ramos stated that an e-mail containing current position statements with instructions for providing independent review and editing notations would be sent to members soon. Taylor emphasized the importance of members completing an independent review promptly so that recommended changes can be added prior to the Committee's group review process in February. The Committee considered the Position Statement Review Schedule.

MOTION: To approve the Position Statement Review Schedule dates as listed.

MADE BY: Michael Peace

SECOND: Kristen Cox

The motion **passed** unanimously.

9. PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

Public policy staff provided updates regarding public policy activities including an update on State Supported Living Centers (SSLC) data, the Senate's 84th Interim Charges, and daytime terminology and activities available

to people with developmental disabilities including day habilitation, sheltered workshops, and community-based non-work.

Ramos explained that information is routinely made available regarding State Supported Living Centers (SSLCs) by the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) and the Promoting Independence Advisory Committee (PIAC). Ramos referenced the SSLC Fact Sheet handout provided to the Committee featuring census, return rate, referral, and barriers to transition data. The Committee discussed the referral outcomes in detail and noted the decrease in referrals resulting in transition for FY 2015.

Ramos referenced the Senate's 84th Interim Charges handout and the Committee reviewed the charges. Ramos highlighted the charges that could impact TCDD's Public Policy Priorities which included guardianship requirements, Medicaid reform, and the Medicaid renewal process.

Public Policy Assistant Ashley Ford presented the day terminology document in the binder provided to the Council. Ford explained that day activities for people with disabilities are complex and have various meanings and definitions. Understanding terminology is the first step in determining how policy is put into practice. Ford noted that a clear understanding of what day activity terms mean can impact the quality of life and level of independence for people with disabilities. The Committee discussed their experiences with day habilitation and sheltered workshops. Public Policy Specialist Linda Logan discussed what she learned at a recent conference she attended in Vermont. Logan noted the process of phasing out sheltered workshops in Vermont presented new challenges to fill the gap regarding how people with disabilities spend their day. Logan noted that having meaningful day activities, whether it is day habilitation or community-based non-work, is very important for people leaving sheltered workshops. Ramos explained that day habilitation facilities are widely regarded as not compliant under the Federal HCBS Settings Rule and referenced the day habilitation document in the binder. To bring Texas day habilitation facilities into compliance, community integration must be addressed. Ramos noted that achieving compliance presents an opportunity to change day activities and that community-based non-work could be a good solution to facilitate community integration and independent living. Although day habilitation programs are segregated under the parameters of the HCBS Settings Rule, staff sought guidance regarding the Committee's support to put resources in improving current day habilitation services and/or testing new models. The Committee indicated that they did not have enough information to provide support for future resources in this area and requested that staff provide the committee with models for further consideration to achieve best practices and HCBS compliance that could be implemented in Texas.

10. OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS

Pharris discussed his presentation on workplace bullying to the Project Committee and noted the progress made during National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Committee Chair Lora Taylor adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.

Beth Stalvey
Secretary to the Council

Date